

RALPH THOMAS KAM

The Legacy of ‘Āinahau: The Genealogy of Ka‘iulani’s Banyan

“And I, in her dear banyan shade,
Look vainly for my little maid.”

—Robert Louis Stevenson

‘ĀINAHAU, THE HOME OF Archibald Scott Cleghorn, his wife, Princess Miriam Kapili Likelike and their daughter, Princess Victoria Ka‘iulani, no longer stands, the victim of the transformation of Waikīkī from the playground of royalty to a place of package tours, but one storied piece of its history continues to literally spread its roots through time in the form of the ‘Āinahau banyan. The ‘Āinahau banyan has inspired poets, generated controversy and influenced legislation. Hundreds of individuals have rallied to help preserve the ‘Āinahau banyan and its numerous descendants.

It is fitting that Archibald Cleghorn (15 November 1835–1 November 1910), brought the banyan to Hawai‘i, for the businessman continued the legacy of the traders from whom the banyan derives its etymology. The word banyan comes from the Sanskrit “*vaniyo*” and originally applied to a particular tree of this species near which the traders had built a booth. The botanical name for the East Indian fig tree, *ficus benghalensis*, refers to the northeast Indian province of

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Bengal, now split between India and Bangladesh. That the tree was introduced in Hawai'i after Western contact is reflected in its Hawaiian name: "*paniana*," a transliteration of the English word.

‘ĀINAHAU BANYAN

The earliest mention of the banyan at ‘Āinahau comes in an 1877 account of the visit of a British visitor to the Cleghorn estate, just two years after Princess Ruth Ke‘elikolani gave the land to Ka‘iulani in honor of her birth:

The pleasure-grounds are handsomely laid out, with flower-beds filled with rare and fragrant plants, conspicuous amidst which are displayed the deep red flowers of the hibiscus, contrasting pleasantly with the vivid green of the acacia, the old familiar Indian banyan, the Hawaiian hall, and other arborescents.¹

The next reference to the tree comes at the celebration of the eighth birthday of Ka‘iulani in 1883. Cleghorn's planting played a prominent role at his daughter's party: "There was a dancing room fitted up, for the little ones, and all the band boys were under the great banyan to pipe for them to dance."²

The tree again took center stage at a reception of Princess Likelike in March 1886. "In the grounds some beautiful specimens of arboriculture attracted the attention of the guests especially the mammoth shady banyan tree planted by Hon. A. S. Cleghorn husband of the Princess."³

Another birthday party for Likelike's daughter, Ka‘iulani, in 1886, this her 11th, again caused mention of her favorite tree. Among the many gifts received by the young girl that year was from: "C.R. [*sic*] Barnfield, painting of a banyan tree on the premises by himself."⁴ The same account mentions that: "Prof. Berger was present throughout the festivities directing the Royal Hawaiian Band that was stationed under the banyan tree painted as mentioned above by an artist."⁵

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

Ka‘iulani's banyan owes its fame not to any intrinsic characteristics or botanical rarity of the tree itself, but to the more ethereal imagination.

The banyan is immortalized in perhaps the best-known remembrance of Princess Kaʻiulani (16 October 1875–6 March 1899), a poem “To Princess Kaiulani,” penned by Robert Louis Stevenson in 1889 on the advent of her departure to England for education:

Forth from her land to mine she goes,
The island maid, the island rose,
Light of heart and bright of face:
The daughter of a double race.

Her islands here, in Southern sun,
Shall mourn their Kaiulani gone,
And I, in her dear banyan shade,
Look vainly for my little maid.

But our Scots islands far away
Shall glitter with unwonted day,
And cast for once their tempests by
To smile in Kaiulani’s eye.⁶

The accompanying note from Stevenson mentions the tree twice, marking the location where the poem was written (“and at Waikīkī, within easy walk of Kaiulani’s banyan!”) and the character of the tree (“the shadow of the mighty tree”).

In February 1893, correspondent Mary Hannah Krout, paid a visit to Archibald Cleghorn at the home of Kaʻiulani then near completion at ʻĀinahau in Waikīkī.

We drove up the winding carriage road to the house, halting under the shade of a giant banyan tree—one of the most magnificent of its kind. It recalled my geography days,—the spreading branches, with their thick, dark-green, glossy leaves; the heavy boughs, with their smooth bark, not unlike our birches, these boughs sending roots down into the earth like pillars, their spreading branches making a canopy under which a caravan might have found shade.⁷

Krout’s observation that a caravan could find a haven under the tree is fitting given the etymology of “banyan.” Her visit also records Cleghorn’s opinion of Kaʻiulani’s banyan: “The shrubbery had been cut away for several yards in every direction to allow the free circulation



FIG. 1. The 'Āinahau Banyan, circa 1897–1900. Bishop Museum.

of the air; and just beyond the main entrance stood the one incomparable banyan tree, which the owner presently informed me was the handsomest thing he had.”⁸

The exchange with the father of the Hawaiian Kingdom’s heir apparent took place a month after the overthrow of the monarchy, so Kraut steered her conversation away from the future of the monarchy. Ka’iulani’s banyan provided another topic. According to Krout:

So I gently turned the conversation upon other and impersonal subjects, and told him how glad I was to see a banyan tree, and one so beautiful as the fine specimen which he had raised. This evidently gratified him, and after pointing out its various beauties he invited me to come into the house.⁹

Despite the overthrow 'Āinahau would continue to serve as a gathering place for high society in Hawaii. Visitors to 'Āinahau would almost always mention two aspects: the engaging princess and the immense banyan.

The princess Kaiulani (Miss Cleghorn) has a delightful home in this vicinity, where are two large banyans, several royal palms and an endless variety of other tropical trees and shrubbery. I accepted an invitation to call on this young lady, and found her affable and easy in her manners, and interesting and sensible as a conversationalist.¹⁰

The receptions at 'Āinahau took place in quick succession as exemplified by back-to-back events in October 1898. The banyan there received greater prominence in the accounts than the house itself:

Princess Kaiulani's reception at Ainahau yesterday afternoon was very largely attended. The Princess and Mr. Cleghorn received under the large banyan tree near the house. Only a very few Hawaiians put in an appearance as they all attended the reception the day before. At that time Queen Liliuokalani and Prince David Kawanakoa assisted in receiving.¹¹

Less than six months later, in March of 1899, the banyan that had long served as a place of mirth and dancing would transform to one mourning and dirge with the death of Princess Ka'iulani. Traditional rituals replaced the Western receptions. Once again the banyan dominated the scene: "The benches under the banyan tree are occupied by old natives whose voices give the hea inoas [roll calls] as of old."¹² The beloved tree sheltered hundreds of mourners:

Throughout the spacious grounds were scattered groups of the Hawaiian race, mourning for their dead alii. Through the shrubbery, under the magnificent banyan tree which lifts itself into the air in front of

the house, they moved with trembling lips and tear-dimmed eye. True, spontaneous grief reigned in every heart.

Out upon the air, striking strangely upon the ears of a stranger, rose the wailing here and there of some of the older natives just as in years gone by they mourned for their departed dead.

Mingling with the wailing of the old natives and the chanting of the mele floated up the mournful dirges of the band. Seated in front of the home, under the branches of the spreading banyan, the members of the band poured out their melody.¹³

Stevenson's bittersweet poem about Ka'iulani and her banyan and its prescient line that "Her island here . . . shall mourn their Kaiulani gone" experienced renewed interest upon her death, and was quoted in its entirety in obituaries. Stevenson would not "search vainly for his island maid"; he had died four years earlier in Sāmoa. Ka'iulani's death served to further widen the audience and the story behind the poem. A national writer noted shortly after the death of Ka'iulani in 1899: "It is said that Stevenson used to talk and walk with the little Princess under the banyan tree. There she told him that she might be sent to far-off Scotland to be educated. It was to reassure her that he wrote the poem and note referred to."¹⁴ When the Shriners visited Hawai'i in 1900, they visited 'Āinahau, though "Mr. Cleghorn, owing to illness, did not appear. The visitors were then given the freedom, of the house and grounds. Groups loitered under the wide spreading banyan trees and found much to arouse their admiration in the well-kept tropical grove and garden."¹⁵ In March 1904, the *Paradise of the Pacific* carried an extensive account of the banyan tree:

Directly in front of the porch compelling the attention of every visitor is a magnificent banyan, 30 years old, and the parent of all the noted trees of its species in the city. With its cluster of central trunks, enormous branches and abundant foliage, it is the king of trees in this park, and unless destroyed by the woodman, will long outlive every other form of vegetable growth in the demesne.¹⁶

The wife of Jack London wrote of her visit to 'Āinahau in 1907, three years before the death of Archibald Cleghorn: "I was most fascinated by a splendid banyan, a tree which from childhood I had wanted to see. This pleased the owner, whose especial pride it is—

'Kaiulani's banyan'; although he is obliged to trim it unmercifully lest its predatory tentacles capture the entire park."¹⁷

To another visitor to 'Āinahau Cleghorn revealed yet another aspect of the great banyan:

As we walked under the great banyan tree and down the avenues bordered by wonderful palms, and every specie of tree and vine and flowering shrub known in the tropics, Governor Cleghorn said softly: 'I selected all these trees and arranged these grounds for Kaiulani. I wanted the domain to be a rest home for her, and these walks to give her cool shade in her promenades.'

Another visitor, Anne Goodwin Winslow, wrote to her mother after a tea party at 'Āinahau in 1909:

The famous banyan in front of his house is as tall and wide spreading as a small hotel—really one of the most stupendous trees you can imagine and he planted that too . . . This time he showed me Stevenson's poem. It made me feel so strange to put my hand on it. I think you have read it. It begins 'Forth from her land to mine she goes. The island maid, the Island Ross [*sic*]' and at the bottom he had written a little note that was of more interest to me than the poem. It was something to the effect that the poem was written for Kaiulani in April and in the April of her youth, within a short distance of her banyan tree.¹⁸

Cleghorn died in 1910, a year after Winslow's visit. His obituary praised the gardens of his estate: "The grounds are among the most tropically attractive in Honolulu. A long drive leading from Kalakaua avenue, Waikiki, passes between cocoanut groves, and lily ponds, ending under a great banyan tree . . ."¹⁹ In his will, he gave his 'Āinahau estate to the Territory of Hawai'i for a park to honor Ka'iulani. The only restriction he placed on the gift was that the park would close each evening at 6:00. The time restriction allowed the legislature a justification for refusing to accept the gift. The property was subdivided and sold, and the care for Ka'iulani's banyan and a small portion of the property fell to the fledgling Daughters of Hawai'i. The care of the iconic tree fit closely with the mission of Daughters of Hawai'i. Founded in 1903, the organization was formed to "perpetuate the memory and spirit of old Hawaii and of historic facts, and to pre-

serve the nomenclature and correct pronunciation of the Hawaiian language.”²⁰ A decade later the organization saw the near destruction of the tree. When ‘Āinahau caught fire in October 1921 Ka‘iulani’s banyan tree served as a firebreak and prevented the destruction of a number of nearby residences. The naming of the banyan in news accounts also reflects a change in focus from Hawaiian royalty to an American poet.

The famous Stevenson banyan tree, under which he wrote many of his stories, and where he used to linger with the beautiful Princess Kaiulani, whom he celebrated in a poem, was the hero of the fire. The noble tree stood as a protecting wall, halting the spread of the flames and saving the many bungalows which in these degenerate days clutter up the once broad and unfenced acres of the ancient royal estate.²¹

Thus the building that had engendered so many memories of notable visitors was gone. The fire also reminded travel author and *Star Bulletin* journalist, Clifford Gessler of the fiery history of the site:

The Stevenson banyan, one of the most stately trees in Honolulu, was planted on the site of an ancient tribal cooking place, where the ground had been saturated for years with the fat of pigs, fowl and fish, mingled with the ashes of a thousand fires and the memories of many luaus, or Hawaiian feasts.

Gessler then gave his prognosis for the storied tree: “The Stevenson banyan was badly damaged, but is expected to survive.”²² The Ka‘iulani banyan did indeed survive, albeit on a much smaller portion of the estate, and received a bronze plaque commemorating its role in history.

The beautiful banyan tree in the former private grounds of Āinahau, residence of the late Princess Likelike, sister of King Kalakaua and Queen Liliuokalani, and her husband, the Hon. Archibald S. Cleg-horn, and now standing on a small plot of land which was deeded to the Daughters of Hawaii, was the scene of a ceremony on October 16, 1930, when a bronze tablet was attached to the tree and unveiled under the auspices of the Daughters of Hawaii. It was the anniversary of the birthday of Princess Kaiulani, daughter of Princess Likelike, and who, in the reign of Liliuokalani, was Heir Apparent to the throne of Hawaii.

She was born October 16, 1875, and died in Honolulu in April, 1899 [Ka'iulani actually died on 6 March 1899]. The banyan was planted by her father and it was her favorite place for recreation. Robert Louis Stevenson, in 1889, often sat beneath it with the Princess and to her he dedicated a charming poem in which he referred to "her banyan." Earl Schenck designed the plaque. Mrs. Julie Judd Swanzy, regent, was in charge of the exercises and read an interesting sketch of the life of Princess Kaiulani.²³

Within two decades of the bequest the treasured banyan became a burden for the Daughters of Hawai'i. The rapidly growing tree became more than the small organization could handle. "Guardians of the tree complained that pruning cost \$700 yearly; the Parks board could not be bothered; the Robert Louis Stevenson school did not want responsibility."²⁴ Neighbors of the tree signed a petition in 1938 calling the tree "a first class nuisance."²⁵ The Daughters of Hawai'i were hard pressed to resolve the situation. "The following year [1939] the residents of the area solicited the assistance of the Outdoor Circle, whose members agreed that, indeed, the tree was not healthy and that it would be difficult, if not impossible to save it."²⁶ With the assistance of the Outdoor Circle, the property was eventually sold, relieving the Daughters of Hawai'i of its continued commitment. The tree would continue shading the Tusitala Street lot (Tusitala was the Samoan name for Stevenson, literally "story teller") for another decade. The final destruction of the banyan came in 1949.²⁷ Despite the destruction of the 'Āinahau tree at least three other banyans made from cuttings from the mother tree lived on.

KA'IULANI ELEMENTARY SCHOOL BANYAN

In 1900, Archibald Cleghorn provided "a little banyan tree, which he had rooted from the famous tree at 'Āinahau"²⁸ for the Kapālama school named in his daughter's honor. Students had started attending Ka'iulani School the previous year on April 25, 1899.²⁹ It had opened "with 127 boys and 170 girls. Of this number 138 were Hawaiian and 117 part Hawaiians and 18 Portuguese."³⁰ On October 13, 1899, the students had honored the late princess with the song "Kaiulani Alii," sung to the tune of "Hawai'i Pono'i:"

With voices sweet and dear
 Oh, Kaiulani dear
 Thy name we honor here
 In words sincere
 Chorus
 Our school is named for thee
 Kaiulani 'lii
 Princess of liberty
 All praise to thee
 With flowers sweet to day
 We weave for thee the lei
 And deck thy picture gay
 "Kaiulani e !"³¹

Though tucked away on the periphery of Ka'iulani Elementary School, progress also threatened the banyan tree there: "New school building plans indicated classroom construction at the very site of the tree." The designers should not be faulted for the location on the quieter Robello Lane side of the campus. Fortunately, for the banyan, public protest changed the fate of the tree. "Parents and teachers were dismayed at the idea of losing their impressive banyan tree planted on Arbor Day in 1900 by Mrs. Nina Fraser, then principal of the school. When the landscape committee members of the Outdoor Circle learned of the situation, they joined forces with the parent-teachers to save the historic tree."³² Today, the bronze plaque from the 'Āinahau banyan sits at the foot of the Ka'iulani School banyan. Across King Street, visible from the Ka'iulani School banyan, sits another tree, this one unaffected by threats of construction; it sits in the middle of Banyan Street.

BANYAN COURT MALL IN KAPĀLAMA

Although the pedigree of the tree at Banyan Court Mall in Kapālama is not specifically recorded, the land was owned by Princess Ruth Ke'elikolani, godmother of Ka'iulani, whose father, Archibald Cleg-horn, planted the 'Āinahau tree. The banyan tree, also located adjacent to Lili'uokalani's Kapālama home called Mu'olaulani, played a role in Wilcox Rebellion of 1889 that attempted to reverse the Bayonet Constitution. The testimony in the trial of Albert Loomens places

the initial staging area for the rebellion at the banyan tree bordering Lili'uokalani's Kapālama residence: "We were all arranged in two lines near the banyan tree."³³

The tree, located on King Street between Kaumakapili Church and St. Elizabeth's Episcopal Church, provided a landmark and meeting location for political meetings following the overthrow. "They know that tree, growing conspicuously in the middle of the short Banyan Rd. . . . is the center of political activities in the 5th district; that many stormy battles of ballots in the 'stormy 5th' have been waged in the shade of this round tree."³⁴ The banyan also provided the name for a residential development near the banyan in the 1920s.

KING-KE'EAUMOKU BANYAN

About four miles southeast from Banyan Court Mall on South King Street at its intersection with Ke'eaumoku Street once stood another landmark banyan tree. The King-Ke'eaumoku tree came from one of the earliest cutting from the 'Āinahau tree. Cleghorn planted it in 1863,³⁵ just a dozen years after his arrival, in what served then as a government nursery. The banyan tree also served as a landmark for the facility. The Government Nursery was "very close to the turn to the Waikiki road on King street and may be easily found if one seeks out a large banyan tree on the town corner and another of the Chinese species a little further in."³⁶ Ferdinand Schnack in his *Aloha Guide* of

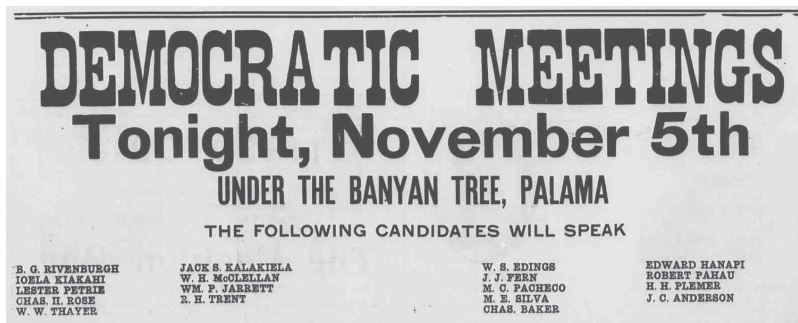


FIG. 2. A call for a political meeting at the Banyan Street banyan. From the December 11, 1905 issue of *The Democrat*.

1915 noted the Nursery Park had “a rare collection of miscellaneous trees, the banyan tree at the corner being a good specimen.”³⁷

A century after its planting the condition of the King-Ke‘eaumoku tree was the subject of discussion of the 699th meeting of the Hawaiian Entomological Society meeting at the Hawaii Sugar Planters’ Association’s Agee Hall. Dr. Hardy presented notes for Dr. M. Sasakawa of Kyoto Prefectural University:

Thoracaphis fici (Takahashi): Mr. Kim exhibited specimens and reported that a heavy infestation of this banyan aphid was observed on *Ficus benghalensis*, the large banyan tree at King and Keeaumoku streets. Associated with the aphids is the sooty mold fungus which covers a large portion of the tree. Together these two agents are responsible for the poor condition of the tree, and not poisoning from herbicides which was suspected to be the cause.

The King-Ke‘eaumoku banyan, however, would be felled not by disease but by progress, in the form of the widening of King Street. As early as 1963, the giant banyan on the *mauka*-Waikikī corner of the intersection of King and Ke‘eaumoku streets was threatened with destruction. An editorial protested cutting the tree in April 1963. Mayor Neal Blaisdell sought to allay concerns when he announced in May that the tree was safe. Six months later the City Council voted 7-2 to fell the tree, only to be told by the state land department that it needed a state permit. By May 1964 the banyan was once again threatened. The Outdoor Circle entered the fray to save the historic tree, going so far as promising money to maintain it. In January 1967 the city council inspected the site and a month later voted 8-1 to remove the tree. Frank Fasi, the sole vote to save the tree, had predicted its doom. Fasi’s political rival, Kekoa Kaapu, sought to move the tree; the Outdoor Circle proposed to move the road around the tree. Not surprisingly, given the numerous opinions regarding the banyan, the mayor looked at five plans for the tree, including a plan to plant sections of the tree in several locations. The last plan prevailed, so despite preservation efforts, the Indian banyan was cut down on Sunday, 29 October 1967. A memorial service marked the event.

The banyan tree would not be the only victim of the widening; A circle of royal palms that once surrounded the Kamehameha statue on King Street may have been the target for retaliation for the threat-



FIG. 3. The King-Ke'eumoku Street Banyan, July 10, 1923. Bishop Museum.

ened destruction of the King-Ke'eumoku banyan tree. The *Hawaiian Journal of History* notes the circumstances surrounding the collateral damage:

On the morning of February 3, 1967, Judiciary Building employees arrived at work to find that the seven royal (Brazilian) palms around the statue had been beheaded. A prankster giving the name of the French existentialist writer Albert Camus, and posing as a State official, had “contracted” with a Samoan tree-trimming company to cut the palms down. Some persons viewed the prank as a desperate effort to protest a Honolulu City Council decision to remove the century-old Keeaumoku street banyan tree to widen the street.³⁸

The controversy surrounding the destruction of the popular tree resulted in the transplanting of sections of the century-old banyan in various locations, including one portion at the Dillingham Boulevard campus of Honolulu Community College. The transplanting of part of the King-Ke'eumoku tree at Honolulu Community College almost didn't occur. At a news conference, the mayor's list of sites slated for portions of the tree did not include the college. When informed that

Honolulu Community College had also requested a piece, the mayor responded: "I had forgotten that . . . If the college wants one of these slips it certainly can have one."³⁹

HONOLULU COMMUNITY COLLEGE BANYAN

Honolulu Community College provost Arthur Oswald and student body president Wallace Kaneshiro assisted in "planting a branch from the King and Keeaumoku St. banyan at the college"⁴⁰ on October 31, 1967. Far from any water source the tree was initially watered by the campus maintenance staff, one wheelbarrow of water at a time. Ironically the dry location was once part of a vast *lo'i* complex fed by *'auwai* from Niuhelewai Stream before the waters were diverted into the Kapālama Canal. The banyan survived, planted just south of the campus boundary with the City and County of Honolulu's Kōkea Street incinerator. The tree continued to grow undisturbed for another seven years. In 1974 a road once again threatened the tree, this time a service road being planned for the college. Students immediately protested the removal of the banyan."⁴¹ Though the students won a reprieve for the tree, the respite was brief. Instead of cutting the tree down, however, an attempt in May 1974 was made to transplant the healthy tree to an area that had previously proven inhospitable—Magic Island. "Through all the misunderstanding and personal involvement in this controversy, the investigation committee has found that the Ke'eumoku Banyan tree has found its home at Magic Island."⁴² Ironically, the school that had been left off the original list of sites nurtured the only surviving portion of the King-Ke'eumoku banyan.

MAGIC ISLAND BANYAN

A Honolulu Community College student filed a report a year later reporting on the health of the banyan tree. "The Banyan tree . . . You may recall that last year there was much concern and rallying on the HCC campus about the Banyan tree. It was to be uprooted to make way for the library building. It was, and was transplanted in Ala Moana Park. As you can see, it's doing well and has rooted firmly. Thanks to HCC student involvement, the tree was saved."⁴³ The banyan contin-



FIG. 4. The Magic Island Banyan, 2011. Ralph Thomas Kam photo.

ues to survive, providing shade for a picnic site that looks out toward Waikiki.

KAPIʻOLANI PARK BANYANS

Although the pedigree of the Kapiʻolani Park banyans cannot be confirmed in the historical record, their source may be inferred. The earliest reference to banyans in the recreational area comes in an 1881 account of the shareholder meeting of the Kapiolani Park Association: “Referring to the condition of the Park, he [the vice president of the Kapiolani Park Association at its 1881 annual meeting] said that there are upwards of 20,000 trees, mostly algarobas, with a few ingas and banyans, etc.”⁴⁴ Cleghorn was elected that year as president of the association responsible for the plantings in the park. The presence of banyan trees at Kapiʻolani Park is again noted in 1885 at annual celebration of founding the International Order of Odd Fellows: “There is abundance of shade beneath the algaroba, inga, kou, and banyan that flourish on the extensive lawn.”⁴⁵ The banyans of the park con-

tinued to delight park goers including an early kindergarten group in 1896:

This last week 30 of the little children with their teachers went to Kapiolani Park, where they waded on the beach, chased crabs, gathered shells, and screamed to the utmost capacity of their lungs. Luncheon they ate under the shade of a large banyan tree in company with beautiful peacocks who walked into their ring to pick at the crumbs thrown them. 'A good time' was the general verdict.⁴⁶

Today, seven Indian Banyan trees grow in the original Kapi'olani Park lands: three in the vicinity of the Honolulu Zoo, one more in the parking lot of the Waikiki Shell, two on Pāki Avenue near the Diamond Head tennis courts, another by the Archery Range. Another two grow *makai* of Kalākaua Avenue adjacent to Kapi'olani Park, one across from the zoo entrance and another 'ewa of Queen's Surf Beach. Even more banyans would exist if a proposal in the *Hawaiian Gazette* had been followed. "The Bystander" column in 1906 proposed a grand grove of banyans:

One of the things—the growing things—that interest our tourists most, is the banyan tree. A youngster back East, poring over the pictures in his first geography, lingers longest over the banyan. He reads that its branches fall and take root and that, if the tree is let alone, it will some day cover a farm. When he grows up and goes to a banyan country he looks up his old friend the arboreal monarch before he identifies himself at the bank.

It strikes me that Honolulu has never risen to the occasion and acquired as many banyans as it needs in its tourist business. Why not a great banyan grove? Why not forty banyans growing together? Eureka! Why not a banyan section of the park?

Take the Diamond Head end of Kapiolani park where the scraggly iron-woods and the commonplace kiawes grow; include the old race-track, which has become an eye-sore and dig big holes all about and enrich them with garbage and fertilizer and then plant banyans. Let the other trees grow as they may, to be eventually cut down. Keep the banyans well cultivated and in ten or fifteen years the grove will be as famous as Waikiki beach or Punchbowl. Think of the vast, leafy [*sic*] tabernacle of the future; that mighty amplitude of pillar and aisle, that cathedral vista of sun-flecked gloom; of the cool, breezy shade.

Then figure out—this is for the supervisors—how much less it will cost to put the unfinished end of the park in banyans than to sod it and provide for flower beds and fountains.⁴⁷

The closest Hawai'i came to fulfilling the writer's dream exists as Banyan Drive in Hilo, where dozens of Chinese banyans, planted by celebrities, line the street. Although the Kapi'olani Park banyan grove never came to fruition, another grove of banyan trees draws tourists at 'Iolani Palace.

'IOLANI PALACE BANYAN

The banyan tree on the northeast corner of the 'Iolani Palace grounds also most likely had its origins from the tree at 'Āinahau, though its pedigree, too, may only be inferred. Though not noted in the historic record, many believe that Queen Kapi'olani planted the tree. The chain of inferences leads once again to 'Āinahau. Kapi'olani's husband, David Kalākaua, was brother of Likelike, whose husband Archibald Cleghorn had planted the 'Āinahau banyan. Even if not planted by the queen, the tree was much loved by Kapi'olani. "In the happy old palace days her favorite pastime was to sit under the shade of the great banyan tree, in the back of the palace yard, with her ladies in waiting, lounging lazily on the grass around her, and tease them about their sweethearts or worm a confession out of this or that timid one jealously guarding the secret of her heart."⁴⁸

LEGACY OF 'ĀINAHĀU

Thus at least two trees clearly remain from Ka'iulani's great banyan at 'Āinahau: the remnant of the King-Ke'eaumoku tree via Honolulu Community College now at the end of Magic Island, and the one planted at the elementary school in Kapālama that bears her name. And several others have close ties to Archibald Cleghorn, or those close to him, including the trees of Kapi'olani Park, 'Iolani Palace and Banyan Court Mall in Kapālama. So Ka'iulani's dear banyan continues to grow and shade beyond her beloved 'Āinahau. Whether the historic connections with Ka'iulani and royalty or the grandeur of the towering banyans provide the motivation for preservation, Hawai'i



FIG. 5. The 'Iolani Palace Banyan, 2011. Ralph Thomas Kam photo.

history is replete with examples of the efforts to protect these arboreal giants, including those of members of the Daughters of Hawai'i, the Outdoor Circle and students and faculty of Ka'iulani Elementary School and Honolulu Community College. Perhaps this is the true legacy of 'Āinahau, that Hawai'i's people have shared the love that Ka'iulani bore for her dear banyan.

NOTES

¹ PCA, 9 June 1877, quoted in Dorothea Woodrum, *Governor Cleghorn, Princess Kaiulani and Aīnahau: Recollections of a Gracious Era in Hawai'i's History* (Honolulu: Woodrum & Staff, Ltd., 1964) [11].

² "Her Birthday Party," *Saturday Press*, 20 October 1883: 5.

³ "Island Locals," *HG*, 2 March 1886: 3.

⁴ "Birthday of the Princess," *The Daily Herald* 18 October 1886: 3.

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